

HEALTH  
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ROTHBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health  
for the year 1946.

The Area of the Rural District is 167,186 acres and the population 5,615.

The number of births registered was 73, two more than in 1945 of these 35 were males (one illegitimate) and 38 females (two illegitimate) the birth rate per 1000 was 13.1 compared with 11.8 in 1945, the rate per 1000 in England and Wales being 18.0. There were 2 still-births, one less than in the previous year.

The number of deaths registered was 79, compared with 67 in 1945, of these 39 were males and 40 females.

The rate per 1000 was 14.1, compared with 11.1 in 1945, the rate per 1000 in England and Wales being 11.5.

There was no deaths in infancy, that is under one year of age, No death was due to road accidents, or other forms of violence, but one was due to suicide.

The chief causes of death were :-

Heart disease, 24 (an increase of 5 in 1945).  
Cancer. 12 (an increase of 2 in 1945).

Infectious Diseases. - One hundred and five cases were notified an increase of 10 on the previous year. They were classified as follows:-

Whooping Cough	48.	Erysipelas	12.
Diphtheria	14.	Scarlet Fever	3.
Measles	13.	Dysentery	1.
Pneumonia	13.	Malaria	1.

There was no death due to measles or whooping cough, but one of pneumonia. Eight of the 14 cases of diphtheria occurred at the Women's Land Army Hostel at Thropton and 2 at institutions with the district, 1 of the four remaining cases, 3 were adults.



## NOTHURBY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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The rate per 1000 was 14.1 in 1946, the

rate per 1000 in England and Wales being 11.5.

There was no death in infancy, that is under one year of age,

No death was due to road accidents, or other forms of violence,

but one was due to suicide.

The chief causes of death were:-

Heart disease, 24 (an increase of 5 in 1945)  
Cancer, 12 (an increase of 2 in 1945)

Infectious Diseases.—The number and rate were as follows:-

an increase of 10 on the previous year. The year was classified

as follows:-

Whooping cough	42.	Dysentery	11.
Diphtheria	14.	Scarlet fever	1.
Measles	13.	Typhoid	1.
Pneumonia	13.	Malaria	1.

There was no death due to measles or whooping cough, but

of pneumonia, 12, of which 10 were males and 2 females.

Women, 12 and 11 males, 12, of which 10 were males and 2 females.

of pneumonia, 12, of which 10 were males and 2 females.



In this connection it is satisfactory to know that there are very few cases of refusal of immunisation against diphtheria in your district, and that a very high percentage of the children are thus protected.

Tuberculosis. Thirteen cases were notified compared with 8 in 1945. Seven of these related to the lungs, 5 to the glands of the neck and one to the kidneys. This is a serious feature being the largest annual number of which I can find record and it makes one wonder if the restricted food - especially oils and fats - is at last sapping resistance to tubercular infection. I don't think the increase can be traced to the housing conditions in these cases. The milk supply of the cases of glandular infection was tested and reported to be satisfactory.

Water supply and Drainage. I am greatly indebted to Mr. Oliver Sanitary Inspector for the following brief report:-

"Water Supplies:- The water supplies in this district have been satisfactory in quality and except for two private supplies, in quantity during the past year. The two supplies, Alnham and Hepple, have this shortage each summer and it is impossible to augment the supply.

Approximately 55% of the population is supplied by the District Council, 3% by Tynemouth Corporation from their main as it passes through the district, and the remainder by private supplies.

Seven samples were submitted for bacteriological examination and one for clinical analysis, and all proved satisfactory.

The number of dwelling-houses supplied direct from public mains is as follows:-

Parish.	No of Houses.	Population.	Direct to House.	By Standpipe.
Rothbury.	552.	1809.	1809	-
Longframlington	164.	553.	553.	-
Whittingham.	130.	422.	325.	65.
Elsdon.	60.	195.	195.	-
Thropton	88.	286.	286.	-



in this connection it is unnecessary to know that there are  
 very few cases of resistance against tuberculosis  
 a year later, and that a very high percentage of the children  
 is thus protected.

Suberculosis. Thirteen cases were notified compared with 8  
 in 1923. Seven of these related to the lungs, 3 to the glands  
 of the neck and one to the kidneys. This is a serious feature  
 being the largest annual number of which I can find record  
 and it makes one wonder if the restricted food - especially milk  
 and fat - is at least helping resistance to tuberculosis  
 don't think the increase can be traced to the housing conditions  
 in these cases. The milk as far as the cases of glandular  
 infection was tested and reported to be satisfactory.

Water supply and drainage. I am greatly indebted to Mr. Oliver  
 Smith, Inspector for the following brief report:-

"Water supply:- The water supplied in the district has  
 been satisfactory in quality and except for the private

supplies, in quantity during the past year. The two  
 supplies, Alham and Hopton, have both enjoyed such a number  
 and it is impossible to estimate the quantity.

Approximately 35% of the population is supplied by the  
 District Council, 3% by the South Corporation and the rest  
 main as it passes through the district, and the remainder  
 by private supplies.

Seven samples were submitted for bacteriological examination  
 and one for clinical analysis, and all proved satisfactory.

The number of dwelling-houses supplied direct from public  
 mains is as follows:-

Year.	No. of houses supplied direct from public mains.	No. of houses supplied by other means.	Total.
1923	502	1809	2311
1922	496	222	718
1921	480	323	803
1920	40	130	170
1919	42	226	268



	No. of Houses.	Population.	Direct to Houses.	By Standpipe.
Totals.	994.	3245.	3030.	65.
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Drainage:- No changes have taken place during the past year. The only sewage disposal works maintained by the Council continue to function satisfactorily at Rothbury and give a <sup>luent</sup> good effluent. No cases of river or stream pollution have been reported".

Remarks. - the weather of 1946 may be described in one sentence, the first half of the year was cold, dry and sunless, the second half was cold, wet and sunless, with the exception of 8 Or 9 fine warm days early in July. Nevertheless the health of the community continued to be satisfactory.

The question as to whether we are as well fed as we were in pre-war times seems to have assumed a political aspect, and as such, I leave members to form their own opinions.

But from a purely medical point of view I think it is the quintessence of nonsense to maintain we are as well fed now as we were before the war.

In assessing the value of food, you must consider not merely quantity, but also quality and variety.

As to quality, two ounces of meat that can be masticated and digested are worth more than two pounds of meat that can neither be chewed or assimilated into the system, and calories are no use if they have to be left on the plate.

As to variety, I think the housewives have worked miracles in evading the necessity of serving up potatoes at almost every meal. In my opinion the most important factor in maintaining health during the past few years has been the increased consumption of milk - especially by children - for which we have to thank our dairy farmers.

In conclusion, and as a post-script, may I point out that the mothers of infants and young children in this district have not been making use of orange juice and cod liver oil as they might. Less than 50% of the potential are applying for these foods.



1934.	3245.	3030.	55.	Total.
<hr/>				
No. of houses. Population. District. By 1934.				

Principles - No changes have been made during the last year.  
 The only sewage disposal works maintained by the Council  
 continue to function satisfactorily at present and give a  
 good result.  
 No cases of river or stream pollution have been reported.  
Remarks - The weather of 1934 may be described in one sentence,  
 the first half of the year was cold, dry and sunny, the second  
 half was cold, wet and sunny, with the exception of 3 or 4 fine  
 warm days early in July. Nevertheless the health of the community  
 continued to be satisfactory.  
 The question as to whether we are as well fed as we were in previous  
 times seems to have assumed a political aspect, and as such, I leave  
 men to form their own opinions.  
 But from a purely medical point of view I think it is the  
 quantity and not the quality of food that we are well fed now as we  
 were before the war.  
 In assessing the value of food, you must consider not merely  
 quantity, but also quality and variety.  
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 digested are worth more than two pounds of meat that can neither be  
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 In conclusion, and as a post-script, may I point out that the  
 mothers of infants and young children in this district have not  
 been making use of orange juice and cod liver oil as they might  
 less than 50% of the potential are applying for these foods.



BRITISH MAKE

I would therefore like to appeal - through the local press - to mothers to make a much greater demand for these essential foods in the interests of their children - the future generation and thus help the children to live long enough to enjoy the days of peace and plenty.

A.S. Hedley.

Medical Officer of Health.

EXCELSIOR

MANIFOLD

BRITISH MAKE



I would therefore like to appeal - through the 1001 Press -  
to mothers to make a more frequent demand that these essential  
loose in the interests of their children - the 1001 Press  
and some half the children to live long enough to enjoy the  
days of peace and plenty.

A. S. Hedley.

Medical Officer of Health.